439 after a ten year reign without leaving any sons." He thus explicitly
643* contradicts the native documents which recount the many competitions
175* for the throne which had divided the royal family, and according to which the "present king" succeeded his uncle (Visai).

He adds that the government of the country was divided, under the
175* high authority of the king, between three great officials:
642
645 1. The head of the army who was "governor of the province which produces benzoin" and commander of the city of Vientiane. He doubtless refers to the prime minister Tian-Thala, the son-in-law of Souligna whom he calls Tevinia-Assen;

2. The governor of Nakhone or viceroy, who commanded the whole southern part of the kingdom, including Attopeu, as far as the Cambodian frontier. This was the Nan-Tharath of the Annals, whom he calls Lachaen;

3. The minister of the Palace who is in charge of relations with ambassadors.

These three high officials "were given /110/ an audience only every two or three months, unless there were some necessity or the king had them summoned expressly."

/693/ Next to the king there was a "tribunal in charge of civil and criminal affairs" which was composed of five of his relatives who had daily access to the sovereign.

/651 Finally, Van Wusthof estimates the king's income at "two piculs"
643/* per year of gum lac, benzoin and gold (1).

1. Cf. Georges Maspero, op. cit. /Un empire colonial francais: l'Indochine. Paris, 1929-1930./ A picul was equal to 61 kilograms.

175* The Account of Father Marini (1666). This evocation of the
114 Laotian kingdom in the seventeenth century does not differ appreciably, on the whole, from two travel accounts published in Italian at about the same time by the Jesuit fathers Martini (quoted p. 104, note 2) and Marini. A translation of the latter's accounts was placed on sale in Paris in 1666 (2). No matter how picturesque it may be in its

/127/ 2. Relation nouvelle et curieuse des royaumes de Tonquin et de Laos, traduite de l'italien du P. Marini Romain, par L.P.L.C.C. (F. Lecomte; cel.), a Paris, chez Gervais Clouzier, au Palais, sur les degres, en montant pour aller a

643* Indeed King Zakarine, no matter what his attitude of detachment
648* towards power, was noteworthy for his simplicity, his good sense and
175* his ability to see /323/ the usefulness of certain reforms. For he was
/178/ very poorly seconded by the mandarins of the kingdom council (Senam),
/646/ who were "incompetent men and scoffers dominated by their immediate and individual interests" (1). On the whole, however, the

1. Cf. ibid., p. 78.

642 political and social organization which we found was a good one,
178 and we acted wisely in preserving all the mechanisms of the native administration and in respecting the traditions, customs and mores of the populations throughout all of Laos, insofar as they were compatible with our own institutions (2). This was all the more easy for

2. Thus we were led to suppress radically the slave traffic which was enriching a few Siamese, Cambodian, Laotian and Burmese mandarins. Cf. L. de Reinach, op. cit. /Le Laos (Posthumous edition), Paris, 1911./, pp. 230 ff.

us in that all the Laotian muongs (whether or not they were dependencies of Luang-Prabang) had a similar organization which was a smaller model of that of the kingdom (except for the Senam) and
647 was an obvious vestige of the epic times of Fa-Ngoum and the great
642 State of Lan-Xang (3). Like the king, the governors of /324/
631

3. The following was, in outline, the political organization of the kingdom of Luang-Prabang in 1894:

/643/* At its head the king, the great master of existences (Somdet-Phra-Chao), and the second king, the great master responsible for the preservation of property (Chao-Maha-Oupahat).

Then came the minister princes: the Ratsavong or first prince and right-hand minister; the Ratsabout or second prince and left-hand minister; and the Komakhoune or third and fourth princes and ministers of the center and of the civil services.

The first three mandarins, who bore the title of Phaya, were, in order of importance: 1) the Phaya Muong-Sen or
/646/ first right-hand mandarin, head of the Senam and head of
*/693/ of justice; 2) the Phaya Muong-Tiane or first left-hand

mandarin and head of the tribunal; 3) the Phaya Muong- 647
Khang or first mandarin of the center and head of the Serv- 642
ice of public works, transports, etc. 631

The Senam was composed of the Phaya Muong-Khoua or /646/
second right-hand mandarin, and of four councillors under the direction of the Phya Muong-Sen.

The judges or Kromakanes, who were under the Phaya /693/
Muong-Sen and the Phaya Muong-Tiane, numbered seven in all and included the Phaya Muong-Sai or second left-hand mandarin.

Last came the mandarins responsible for the collection of /653
taxes, the assembling of labor drafts and the transport of 644/
bamboo, rattan, thatch and pirogues for the king's service and the public services; then the pages and chamberlains or mahaleks, the military leaders, the functionaries responsible for petty tasks inside the palace, the treasurers, storekeepers, etc.

The reader will note the insignificant position reserved /701/
for the military mandarins in this hierarchy. Of Sam-Sene-Thai's powerful army (see above, p. 56), nothing at all remained.

provinces were aided by an Oupahat, a Ratsavong and a Ratsabout who, like the court dignitaries, gave their orders to the tassengs or canton heads who had authority over the village leaders (naibans). By establishing the different government commissions in Laos Pavie therefore strengthened the native authorities in their age-old prerogatives and the princes of Luang-Prabang in /325/ their dynastic rights and privileges. In order to mark their absolute attachment to France and to give more force to their vehement protests against awarding Siam the part of the kingdom situated on the right bank, the latter insisted on receiving, in solemn fashion and as soon as possible, the investiture of the government of the Republic from the commissioner general. After his return from Muong-Sing eight 643*
months later, Pavie drew up on parchment in Hanoi the titles of the old king Oun-Kham, of King Zakarine, of his brother and of the Oupahat Boun-Khong, and on April 19, 1895 proceeded to this important ceremony.

"All those who had a part in the control of affairs," he wrote as he finished the account of his mission, "were present. The entire populace was invited. In the name of the government of the

693 Judges, or "Kromakanes" in Laotian, are responsible to the Phaya-Muong-Sen and the Phaya-Muong-Tiane, and are the:

Phaya-Muong-Sai, second mandarin of the left.
Phya-Sieng-Tai.
Phya-Muong-Pak.
Phya-Sak-Kha.
Phya-Muong-Khouk (particularly responsible for supervision of prisons).
Phya-Phane-Nong.
Mune-Vi-Sai.

647 651 [492] The mandarins responsible for the collection of taxes, the assemblage of statute laborers, and the transport of bamboo, rattan, thatch straw and pirogues for the king's service and the public service are the:

Phaya-Soune, mandarin of the middle.
Pha-Jotha.
Sanone.
Si-Phat-Thamane.
Si-Samoute.
Si-Sounone.
Sene-Tiane.
} Under the orders of the Phaya-Muong-Khang and the Phaya-Soune.

The pages of the king bear the honorary title of "Mahatlek." They are the:

644
1. Phaya-Nak-Phoumine, Phaya-Kham-Soune-Phou } Chief pages and chamberlains.
2. Phya-Na-Heua, Phya-Mune-Na, Phya-Natai, Phya-Muong-Phene } Principal pages attached to the king's person, who bear his arms and insignia in ceremonies.
3. Phout-Thavong-Mahakhote, Mune-Vong-Sai, Akhasa } Chamber pages, guardians of the king's property, of his parasol, etc.

701 The military leaders are the:

Phaya-Soupho.
Phaya-Kham-Mone.
Phya-Vieng-Ke.
Phya-Vieng-Khame.
Oupasa.
Mune-Sanone-Tiai.
} Responsible for various military duties.

643 canton heads and heads of villages, who might be described as cantonal and municipal delegates, gather in the capital of the muong to
646 vote on the names of candidates which are presented. The name of the one who obtains the most votes is then presented by the province administrator to the superior resident, who accepts or rejects him after studying his personal qualities, his aptitudes, his background, etc. In the case of a rejection the electors are consulted a second time. The superior resident names the four chiefs of muongs by delegation from the governor general. These latter may not begin office until they receive their commission, insignia and seal from the French government.

In general, the electors' choice falls on a son, brother or nephew of the high official who is to be replaced, unless he is unworthy or notoriously incapable.

635 Mandarins of lesser importance are named by the province head
647 with the approval of the persons under his administration and of the superior resident.

647 Officials receive a salary only in the kingdom of Luang-Prabang
652 and in the provinces of Vien-Tiane and Muong-Hou. Everywhere else they must be content with a fee equivalent to one-tenth of the sums they collect as taxes.

• [693] In their capacity as judges, the muong authorities also collect legal costs and shares in the sums of certain fines, as is the custom of the land.

647 Such, in its general outline, is the organization of the Laotian
576 administration. It generally functions well, is sufficient to the needs of the natives and makes it possible for us, despite the vast extent of our possession, to keep only a few European officials there.

[192] The outer forms of respect towards great men, mandarins and anyone who holds a rank are dictated by Laotian etiquette, as in Siam. One does not speak to a king, a [495] [Illustration] [496] [Blank page] [497] prince or a leader as one would to an equal or an inferior. There are special expressions which are peculiar to the representatives of certain social classes or to the holders of dignities. But even while it conserves, at bottom, the ritual ceremonial forms, Laotian etiquette is paternal and much more spontaneous and genuinely respectful than elsewhere.

When they speak to the king, to princes, to great men, etc., inferiors prostrate themselves, with forehead on clasped hands, near the ground, or with their hands clasped above their head. Outside of this particular case, those present may remain squatting, smoke, talk, laugh and even disturb the audience somewhat. Moreover, no lack

Whatsoever of respect is to be seen in this liberty.

whatsoever of respect is to be seen in this liberty.

3. JUDICIAL SYSTEM

692
563

In French Laos, justice is meted out by the native tribunals:
1. In accordance with the codes of Vien-Tiane (1) or Luang-

(1) See Appendix XXIX.

Prabang for all individuals of the Thai race and for Khas of certain tribes;

2. In accordance with the Burmese customs which are peculiar to the Lus of the territory of Muong-Sing;

3. In accordance with their particular customs for the individuals of various races--Meos, Yaos, etc.--who are not subject to any of the above codes.

The judgments of the native tribunals are examined, and revised or approved if the need should arise, by the French authorities.

Matters of little importance, such as those which fall under the jurisdiction of our justices of the peace, are settled by canton heads or the heads of villages.

Acts qualified as criminal by our law are judged by a mixed province tribunal presided over by the government commissioner who is head of the province. He is seconded by a native assessor and by a secretary-clerk. Such tribunals sit in the capital of each province. [498] In reaching its decisions, it takes its inspiration from the native laws and customs, insofar as they agree with our sentiments of humanity and dignity and with the spirit of French law. It judges appeal cases which have already come before the native tribunals.

Finally a superior court, presided over by the superior resident aided by two assessors, one European and the other a native, fulfills the functions of a court of appeal with respect to the mixed province tribunals.

Foreign Orientals, that is to say Annamites, Cambodians, Chinese, Burmese, Siamese, etc., may be judged only by the mixed province tribunals. As for Europeans, they are subject only to the regularly constituted French tribunals of Tonkin and Cochinchina.

693 The venality of the magistrates in Laos cannot be denied, as in all of the Far East, and the natives generally prefer our arbitration to that of their natural judges. They say that we render justice free of charge, while their own magistrates take more notice of the offerings

693 than of the rights of the parties. Our administration is making praiseworthy efforts to halt these abuses. Those who sell justice in this way are removed from their posts, and it is to be hoped that within a few years' time most, if not all, of the Laotian judges will be upright and disinterested. As a means toward stopping these deplorable habits and informing the parties in lawsuits of the legal costs which they will regularly be asked to pay, Lieutenant-colonel Tournier took a very useful first step in April 1898, by setting up a schedule of court costs in accordance with the laws and customs of Vien-Tiane (1).

695 691 435

(1) The following, for example, are the court costs to be paid in a case of theft of domesticated animals:

Legal costs.....	15.00 francs	to be paid by each accused person.
Clerk.....	3.75 "	
Archivist.....	2.25 "	
Court roll.....	1.50 "	
Prison costs.....	11.25 "	

The legal costs are divided as follows:

Tiao-Muong.....	5.00 francs	15 francs.
Oupahat.....	2.50 "	
Judge hearing the case..	7.50 "	

The prison costs are divided as follows:

Jailer.....	5.00 francs	11.25 francs.
Upkeep for food for prisoners whom their families cannot feed or who do not work outside.....	6.25 "	
Lighting and upkeep of prison.....		

It goes without saying that, in addition to court costs, the guilty parties are liable to a fine, which, in the present case, would be 24 francs per person.

[499]

4. THE TAX STRUCTURE

a. Direct taxes

651 654 The direct taxes include the head tax, the optional redemption of statute labor and the licenses for Foreign Oriental merchants.

A census taken before the end of each year by the native authorities and checked by the administrators who are heads of provinces makes